

Town of Lincoln Budget Board Meeting

February 26, 2015

Present:

Carl Brunetti Bill McManus Felix Fernandes

Mike Babbitt Paul Deutsch Bill DiBiasio

Bob Turner Richard Foster

Chris Weggeland Mike O'Connell

Absent:

Rhonda Lacombe

Call to Order

The meeting began at 7:30 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of February 25th were distributed for review.

Bill DiBiasio made a motion, seconded by Mike Babbitt to approve the minutes.

The minutes were accepted as amended by a vote of 9-0 with Felix Fernandes abstaining as he was not present on February 25th.

Correspondence

The School Department sent correspondence clarifying that Step 11 was created within the budget only to differentiate between those that are at Step 10 and those who will be moving from Step 9 to Step 10 since that comes with a large increase. Nothing has changed contractually and a Step 11 still does not exist.

The Budget Board had asked why the state aid and Medicaid reimbursement numbers differed between the School Committee's recommended budget and the Town Administrator's.

Both believe their proposals are a fair representation, but the Governor's budget is not out yet

Medicaid reimbursements are expected to decrease due to students being brought back in from out of district placements.

The Town Administrator plans to attend the Budget Board meeting on Wednesday, March 4th to answer the Budget Board's questions in person. The Budget Board will then discuss School Capital at their Thursday, March 5th meeting since their Tour of School Facilities will be complete.

The Superintendent will be sending backup information requested for all capital projects.

Public Comment

There were no public comments or questions at the time.

Business

Municipal Budget

There was an article in the Valley Breeze speaking to the possibility of a recycling change in which the Town Administrator noted that both options are in his recommended budget so that a decision can be made.

That was not the Budget Board's understanding, and they will ask for clarification when meeting with him. They will also ask for more information and the bids that led to the \$75,000 estimate to privatize recycling.

In addition, they will ask the status of the snow plowing budget and whether it is believed a supplemental appropriation will be needed for that.

Education Budget

The family health benefit plan costs about \$21,600 with an approximate \$3,600 employee coshare, making the cost to the Town about \$17,600 per family. The Budget Board will check that information for the exact figures.

It was noted that the Town is self-insured, so those numbers could be changed based on prior claims.

Also, the Schools do pay a percentage of those rates for part time FTEs.

A majority of faculty currently earn about \$100,000 or more per year when considering base salary, longevity, steps, department head pay, other stipends, etc.

That is not expected to decrease now that the retirement age will be increasing and employees will stay longer at higher rates.

It was noted that the School Department budgets positions that are being replaced at Step 4 since it is not known what level the new hire will come in at.

The Budget Board will analyze FTEs because at initial evaluation they do not seem to add up properly.

There were some reductions when the Fairlawn school closed, but most of the positions were repurposed and remained in the budget.

There are some positions that are not paid for out of the operating budget, such as grants.

The School Department is planning on having 2 retirees next year and budgeted for such in breakage.

There are major penalties to the employee if they do not let the School Department know by December 31st if they plan to retire by the end of the school year.

A lot of retirements are anticipated in the coming year when the retirement age changes.

Upon initial analysis of salaries, it appears the numbers are matching the contracted figures.

The contracts call for 183 days of work, which includes 3 professional development days (one during the school year and two days in the summer).

There is legislature in the assembly currently that would make it so that all contracts will continue as they exist if not settled by the time they expire.

The Budget Board noted that in passing observation, the roofs at the schools have not been cleared of snow yet.

The increase in salary from Step 9 to Step 10 is large, and there have been talks about adding more steps to the process to smooth that out so it does not happen all in one year.

Teachers are not on the social security system, therefore there is no FICA in the budget for them.

The School Department will be providing a list of accounts that have been moved due to UCOA and preferences, and where they have been moved to and from.

The Budget Board discussed that there is an inequity in the funding formula for charter schools which the state is now looking at.

The Budget Board will also be looking more closely at the Transportation Contract for possible adjustments.

There is a position requested to monitor and validate residency to be sure all the students attending school in Lincoln do reside in Town.

The next meeting of the Budget Board will be the Tour of School Facilities which will be held Saturday, February

28th at 8:00 am.

Public Comment

There were no public comments or questions at the time.

Ad journ

Bill DiBiasio made a motion, seconded by Felix Fernandes, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 8:58 pm.